AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace Paragraphs 11, 17, 18, 19, 29, 34, 35 and 36 with the following paragraph rewritten in amendment format:

[0011] An axle assembly that includes a differential gearset in a carrier housing. A housing cover is coupled to the carrier housing and is operable for sealingly closing a window on the carrier housing through which there is access to the differential gearset. The housing cover includes a cover member and a seal ring. The cover member includes a mating face and a plurality of raised connection points that are disposed between the carrier housing and the mating face[[.]] The seal ring is coupled to the mating face and encircles each of the raised connection points. The seal ring further includes at least first and second ring members that are disposed between each of the raised connection points. The seal ring sealingly engages the carrier housing and the mating face.

[0017] Figure 4 is a cross-section of Figure 5; ~~and~~

[0018] Figure 5 is an assembly view ~~of Figure 6~~ showing the differential assembly cover secured to the differential assembly housing and the gasket compressed therebetween[[.]];

[0019] Figure 6 is ~~a portion of a cross-sectional view constructed in accordance with the various embodiments of the present invention~~ another assembly view showing a shoulder bolt securing the differential assembly cover to the differential assembly housing ~~showing~~ with the gasket in a compressed state; and

[0029] With reference to Figure 4, a portion of the cross-section of the cover 100 is shown with the seal ring 106 encircling the raised connection point 116. A segment ~~120~~ of the bowl portion 102 connects with the cover mating face 110. Each of the apertures 118 is formed within each of the raised connection points 116. It will be appreciated that the seal ring 106 is shown in an uncompressed state in Figure 4, and in a compressed state in Figure 5.

[0034] Other devices can be employed to address compression of the seal ring 106 a proper distance or put another way to limit compression. Any such device must not only be robust, easy to use, and compliant with other materials, it must also be cost effective in a mass production scale. Figure 6 depicts a portion of the cover 100 using a shoulder bolt, which is generally indicated by reference numeral 134. The shoulder bolt 134 has a head 136 from which a shank 138 extends. The shank 138 has a threaded-portion 140 and a non-threaded-portion 142, which is located between the threaded portion 140 and the head 136. The length of the shank 138 includes a length of the threaded-portion 140 and a length of the non-threaded-portion 142, which are indicated by reference numerals 144 and 146, respectively, a shown in Figure [[4]] 7. It will be appreciated that the threaded portion 140 has a smaller diameter than the non-threaded portion 142, such that the end of the non-threaded portion 142, adjacent to the threaded portion 140, generally forms a shoulder 142a.

[0035] The shoulder bolt 134 can be inserted into a threaded aperture 148 or a conventional nut. It will be appreciated that the shoulder bolt ~~30~~ 134 can only be inserted a distance 144 into the threaded aperture 148. As shown in Figure 6, the shoulder bolt 134 is inserted through the differential assembly cover ~~22~~ 100 and the

housing 132. The shoulder bolt 134 is then secured into the threaded aperture 148. It will be appreciated that the shoulder bolt 134 compresses the cover 100 against the housing 132 enough to properly clamps the seal ring 106 therebetween. As such, the shoulder bolt 134 limits the compression of the seal ring 106 as the shoulder bolt 134 can only be inserted the distance 144 into the threaded aperture 148.

[0036] In lieu of the shoulder bolt 134, a compression limiter (not shown) may be introduced between the cover 100 and the housing 132 to establish a proper compression distance for the seal ring 106. In various embodiments, a compression limiter may take the form of a sleeve (not shown) over a conventional fastener, which may be used to limit the insertion of the fastener. While introducing compression limiters may be a less expensive option than using shoulder bolts, compression limiters add to the overall parts count of the assembly and can increase the overall cost of the process.